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**From:** Dieu, Martin [Dieu.Martin@epa.gov]  
**Sent:** 12/22/2020 12:16:04 AM  
**To:** Nishida, Jane [Nishida.Jane@epa.gov]; Kasman, Mark [Kasman.Mark@epa.gov]  
**Subject:** Re: PREVIEW: EPA Administrator meets with Taiwan's Foreign Minister to commit to continued joint environmental collaboration - Preview

Please confirm you are ok with the draft Taiwan press release. Thank you  
Martin Dieu  
Mobile and Text: 202-834-8550

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**From:** Block, Molly <block.molly@epa.gov>  
**Sent:** Monday, December 21, 2020 4:39 PM  
**To:** Dieu, Martin; Zimmer, Nathaniel; Rodriguez, Alejandra (Allie); Allen, Jacob; Hewitt, James; Johnson, Taylor; McFaul, Jessica; Murray, William; Walters, Ben  
**Subject:** PREVIEW: EPA Administrator meets with Taiwan's Foreign Minister to commit to continued joint environmental collaboration - Preview

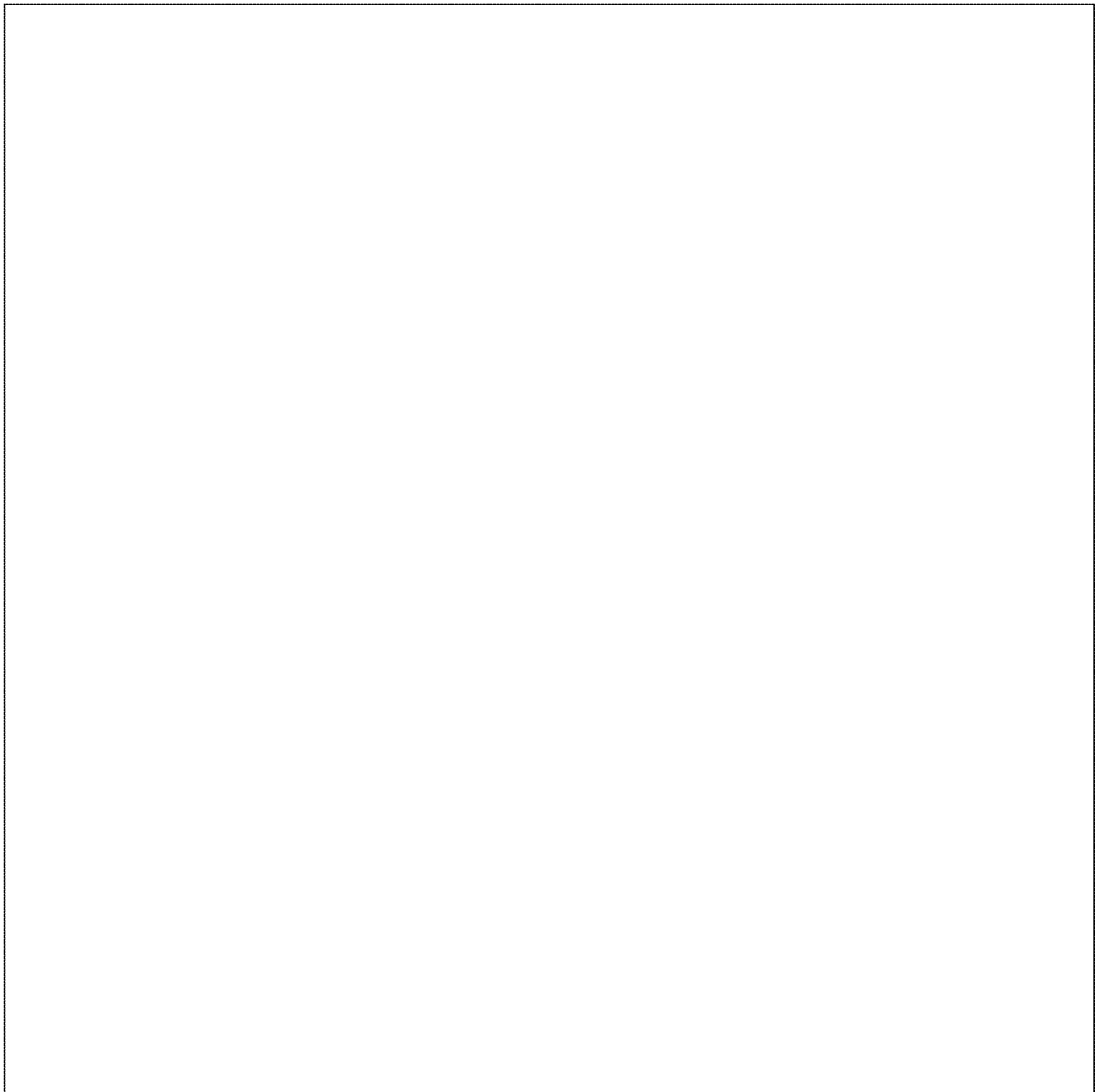
See below. Two small edits from Mandy. Let me know if there are any questions. Plan is to put this out around 9:00 AM ET tomorrow morning.

Molly

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**From:** EPA Press Office <press@epa.gov>  
**Sent:** Monday, December 21, 2020 4:38 PM  
**To:** Block, Molly <block.molly@epa.gov>  
**Subject:** EPA Administrator meets with Taiwan's Foreign Minister to commit to continued joint environmental collaboration - Preview

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## **EPA Administrator meets with Taiwan’s Foreign Minister to commit to continued joint environmental collaboration**

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**WASHINGTON** (December 22, 2020) – Yesterday night, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Andrew Wheeler and Taiwan’s Minister of Foreign Affairs, Joseph Wu committed to extending the International Environmental Partnership between EPA and Taiwan, through the American Institute in Taiwan (AIT) and the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office (TECRO), and to supporting a new Indo-Pacific Marine Litter Initiative with Taiwan’s Oceans Affairs Council and Environmental Protection Administration.

“The United States and Taiwan are poised to expand regional cooperation and address land-based sources of marine litter in Asia,” **said EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler.**

“EPA proudly supports the new Indo-Pacific Marine Litter Initiative, which should make dramatic improvements to the problem of marine litter in the coming years.”

“The Indo-Pacific Marine Litter Initiative is an opportunity to look back and recognize our joint success as we look forward to the future and consider how to foster the next generation of environmental cooperation,” **said Assistant Administrator for International and Tribal Affairs Chad McIntosh**. “The International Environmental Partnership between EPA and Taiwan continues to bring **together** U.S. and Taiwan environmental expertise and technology to address environmental health concerns, and the United States and Taiwan can work shoulder to shoulder to address the challenges **posed by** marine litter.”

Taiwan shares waters with the largest sources of marine litter; a recent study estimates that nearly 90 percent of the global load of marine litter originates from just ten rivers, and eight are located in Asia. The Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation forum estimated in a 2020 report that marine litter had caused more than \$11 billion in damages to member economies in 2015 alone. The ocean is our shared inheritance, and the world must work together to address the global problem of marine litter.

In 2014, the United States and Taiwan created the International Environmental Partnership and have worked closely with more than 50 countries in the Indo-Pacific region and worldwide to protect human health and the environment. Together with national governments, local agencies, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, and academia, we have made common cause to address global challenges such as marine litter, children’s health, air quality, mercury monitoring, electronic waste management, site remediation, and law enforcement. This program has raised the global profile and visibility of Taiwan’s environmental leadership in Asia and around the world.

This summer, EPA and Taiwan expanded our successful cooperative agreement, and our partnership now includes new partners such as Taiwan’s Ocean Affairs Council, Ministry of Health and Welfare, Ministry of Economic Affairs, and Ministry of Education. With Taiwan EPA and Ministry of Health and Welfare, we are expanding our Asia-Pacific Children’s Health Initiative, and developing a new regional pediatrician mentoring program in Taiwan to address environmental risks to children’s health. Our collaboration will help protect children in the U.S., Taiwan, and across the Indo-Pacific region.

As we look to the future, EPA’s close collaboration with Taiwan will continue to grow stronger and Taiwan’s environmental leadership will continue to be recognized through the International Environmental Partnership. EPA commends Taiwan for its commitment to global leadership and celebrate our joint environmental initiatives. As we seek to address the complex challenge of marine litter, EPA looks forward to continuing our important partnership with Taiwan for another 27 years and beyond.

## **Background**

In October, EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler released the U.S. Federal Strategy for Addressing the Global Issues of Marine Litter at an event at Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton, Fla. A top priority for the Trump Administration, The strategy highlights the federal government's four pillars for tackling the issue of marine litter: (1) building capacity, (2) incentivizing the global recycling market, (3) promoting research and development, (4) promoting marine litter removal.

Five countries in Asia account for over half of the plastic waste input into the ocean: China, Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam. The majority of marine litter comes from land-based sources such as littering and the mismanagement of waste and the most effective way to combat marine litter is to prevent and reduce land-based sources of waste from entering our oceans in the first place. To tackle these issues, the U.S. provides a critical global leadership role in improving waste management and recycling.

Domestically, through EPA's Trash Free Waters program, EPA works directly with states, municipalities, and businesses to reduce litter, prevent trash from entering waterways, and capture trash that is already in our waters. We currently have over 50 partnership projects across the country. This year, EPA awarded over \$7.8 million to 17 recipients within the Gulf States for innovative projects focused on reducing the amount of litter in our waterways through waste prevention and/or removal. EPA will award an additional \$2.1 million through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Trash Free Waters Grant Program established under President Trump to address marine litter within the Great Lakes watershed.

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